

layers are mutually connected by bond sites in the material laminate, within which bond sites the thermoplastic material has been caused to at least partially soften or melt and thereby bond the two material layers together, and wherein the material laminate includes two side portions extending in the length direction and each extending a distance in the width direction from a respective one of the side edges towards the longitudinal central axis of the material laminate and a central portion positioned between the side portions in the width extension of the material laminate wherein the first material layer and the second material layer in the central portion of the material laminate are intermittently bonded together in a first bond pattern and the first material layer and the second material layer in the two side portions of the material laminate are intermittently bonded together in a second bond pattern wherein the first fluid pervious material layer is a fibrous layer arranged so that an outside surface of the material laminate is fibrous and the percentage of bonded area in relation to the total area in the two side portions is greater than the percentage of bonded area in relation to the total area of the central portion.

2. (Amended) A material laminate in accordance with claim 1, wherein the proportion of bonded area in relation to the total area in the central portion is at least 0.5% less than the proportion of bonded area in relation to the total area in the side portions.

3. (Amended) A material laminate in accordance with claim 1, wherein the proportion of bonded area in relation to the total area in the central portion is between 3%

and 6% and the proportion of bonded area in relation to the total area in the side portions is between 5% and 8%.

4. (Amended) A material laminate in accordance with claim 1, wherein each bond site exhibits a smallest extension and a second extension which is perpendicular to the smallest extension, wherein at least the smallest extension in the bond sites of the first bond pattern is less than 0.8 millimetres.

5. (Amended) A material laminate in accordance with claim 4, wherein the smallest extension in the first bond pattern is 0.3 millimetres or less.

6. (Amended) A material laminate in accordance with claim 1, wherein the bond sites comprise spot-bonds.

7. (Amended) A material laminate in accordance with claim 1, wherein the first material layer is a hydrophobic nonwoven material.

8. (Amended) A material laminate in accordance with claim 1, wherein the second bond pattern is denser than the first bond pattern.

9. (Amended) A material laminate in accordance with claim 1, wherein the material laminate is in the form of a coherent, continuous web and that the central portion and the side portions extend continuously in the length direction of the continuous web.

10. (Amended) An absorbent article exhibiting a substantially elongated shape with a length direction, a width direction and a thickness direction and exhibiting a central axis extending in the length direction and two opposing side edges extending in the length direction and comprising a fluid pervious covering sheet, a fluid impervious covering sheet and an absorption body enclosed between the two covering sheets, and wherein the absorbent article exhibits two side portions extending in the length direction and each extending in the width direction from a respective one of the side edges a distance towards the longitudinal central axis of the article and a central portion positioned between the side portions in the width direction of the article, wherein the fluid pervious covering sheet comprises a material laminate in accordance with claim 1, wherein the material laminate, in the central portion of the article exhibits the first bond pattern and the material laminate in the side portions of the absorbent article exhibits the second bond pattern.

11. (Amended) An absorbent article in accordance with claim 10, wherein the length extension of the side portions in the width direction of the article is at least 4 millimetres along all of the length of the each side portion.

Please add the following new claims 12 and 13:

12. (New) A material laminate in accordance with claim 1, wherein the absorbent article is a sanitary napkin, an incontinence protector, or a diaper.

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13. (New) An absorbent article in accordance with claim 10, wherein the second material layers is adjacent the absorption body.